

## **Monthly Report for February 2018**

*Submitted March 5, 2018*

### **Meetings and Conference**

#### Research and Policy Advisory Board Meeting

The Research and Policy Advisory Board met for the first time this calendar year in February. RPB reviewed their charter and discussed designating participants as either standing or ad hoc. RPB also reviewed drafts of new output and provided feedback on the research plan proposal.

#### Data Governance Advisory Board Meeting

The Data Governance Advisory met for the first time this calendar year in February. Data GAB reviewed their charter and the MLDS Gap Analysis in preparation for the upcoming Governing Board meeting.

#### MCCRG

The Center was asked to present to the Maryland Community College Research Group (MCCRG). MCCRG is an affinity group for the Maryland Association of Community Colleges that convenes institutional research staff from each of Maryland's community colleges. MCCRG was interested in learning about Center governance, data usage, and output development. The presentation concluded with discussions around MCCRG-MLDS Center collaboration and the Center extended an invitation to the chair of MCCRG to join RPB.

#### Discussion on Possible Analyses for the Maryland State Board of Education

Following Ross Goldstein's presentation to the Maryland State Board of Education, Center staff met with Dr. Dara Shaw, Director of MSDE's Office of Research and Strategic Data Use, to discuss a specific request from the State Board. Dr. Shaw explained the proposed projects around the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation that are of interest to the State Board, and outlined her direction and expectations. Further information and direction will be provided following the February meeting of the State Board of Education.

#### Data Quality Campaign

The MLDS Center was included in two recent articles by the Data Quality Campaign:

1. [The Art of the Possible - Cross-Agency Data Governance Lessons Learned from Kentucky, Maryland and Washington](#)
2. [Roadmap for Cross-Agency Data Governance](#)

The articles focus on the high quality data governance processes in Kentucky, Maryland and Washington and provide examples of how those processes can be implemented in other states.

### **Center Output**

### Amazon Headquarters Proposal

The Center was asked to provide data for Montgomery County (one of 20 finalists under consideration by Amazon for the location of its second headquarters) to use in response to questions in the Request for Proposals. The Center provided a series of data sets on topics regarding postsecondary enrollment and higher education workforce outcomes. Center staff was able to fully respond to the request and various follow-up requests within two weeks.

### Legislation - Fiscal Estimates

The Center was asked by MHEC to provide data to help them develop a fiscal estimate for HB 860. The bill provides an income tax credit for individuals working in STEM fields. The Center provided data on the number of Maryland students who would meet the following eligibility requirements to earn the tax credit: (a) graduated from an accredited IHE; (b) has outstanding student loan debt; and (c) is employed by a MD based employer and works in a STEM field.

The Center was asked by Department of Legislative Services (DLS) analysts for data to help them estimate the cost of administering the Community College Promise Program, established by [SB 317](#). The program provides a grant to community college students who meet certain criteria. The Center provided data from a prior academic year on how many students met the eligibility requirements established by the bill. The Center also provided data on the amount of other grant assistance those students received. This information will allow DLS staff to make a more informed estimate of the costs of the program.

### Dashboards and Other Output

Center staff continued work on updating and expanding the dashboard series on college enrollments for Maryland public high school graduates. The design and layout for *Information Briefs* (a new output offering), was finalized and the html code developed and tested. Two Information Briefs should be released for publication by mid-March. A preliminary draft of the first Research Spotlight has also been completed. Research Spotlights highlight findings from an existing research report to provide concise insight into the policy-relevant findings through text and data visualizations

## **Research Branch**

### Research Reports

The research in response to Senator Ferguson's request for research related to the relationship between individual level poverty and school concentrated poverty and long term outcomes for students continues to advance. The analytic data file has been created, and preliminary analyses on the number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals throughout middle and high school have been examined. Preliminary analyses focus on students who were never eligible, always eligible, or sometimes eligible for free and reduced price meals.

Preliminary modeling approaches focusing on modeling quarterly wages using a repeated measures design have been successful. This gives the Center the ability to examine the wage trajectory of each student over time, providing a more nuanced understanding when compared to the typical approach of summarizing wages over time.

The research report on “brain drain” has gone through the final review and editing process. This report has been finalized for publication to the website.

Final tables for the research report examining the long term outcomes of dual enrollment participants in comparison to similar non-participants have been prepared.

### Conferences

The research team has prepared two projects for presentation at the 2018 MD Connections conference hosted by MSDE. The first presentation will focus on the use of propensity scores for program evaluation in the absence of randomization to treatment and control groups. The second presentation will focus on the limitations of measuring poverty with administrative data (typically measured using eligibility for free and reduced price meals in education).

Members of the research team are attending the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE) Spring 2018 conference. This conference explores the adoption and implementation of effective research-based practice in education. As part of the conference, members of the research team are also attending a statistical workshop entitled "New Matching Methods for Causal Inference" led by Dr. Jose R. Zubizarreta from Harvard University. This workshop explores new advancements in matching methods that overcome limitations of standard matching approaches. Matching methods are a very popular topic in educational research, and one for which best practice methods are constantly changing. Many center research questions are related to determining the causal impact of a given program or institution, and this knowledge will be useful for future MLDS research projects.

### **System Management**

#### Tasks

1. Along with MSDE and DoIT, Center staff is currently evaluating different options for continuing the Center's Oracle licensing and use at the state enterprise data center.
2. Center staff continues to work with DoIT for ongoing servers and desktops/laptop patching and rebooting of servers and services (takes almost 8 to 16 hours) twice a month.
3. Center staff has updated all MLDSC Data Center environment documentation including physical and logical network diagrams after using DoIT's firewall and switches.
4. Center staff completed a review of all system audit logs.

#### Data Loads

1. Completed loading 2017 degree information data received from MHEC.
2. Completed loading MSDE staff data file.
3. There are MHEC Enrollments, MHEC External Credit System data, DLLR 2017 Quarter 3 data and K12 Attendance and Assessments are in queue for data loading.
4. Performed identity resolution for individuals who have multiple system ID's for the same identifier (SSN).